

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 19, 2006. Claims 1 to 21, 25 to 44, 51, 52, 101, 102, 106, 112 and 113 are pending in the application, with Claims 22 to 24, 45 to 50, 103 to 105 and 107 to 111 having been canceled herein. Claims 1, 2, 25, 51 and 52 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim 4 was objected to for an informality. Specifically, the Office Action contends that “functional information from a the destination device” is improper English. (Office Action, page 2). However, Applicant notes that the word “a” was deleted from the above phrase in the Amendment dated January 3, 2006. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 4 and 101 to 113 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Turning first to the rejection of Claim 4, the Office Action asserts that the phrase “the receiving party” lacks antecedent basis. Applicants respectfully disagree, since Claim 4 recites “a facsimile number of *a receiving party* is designated, said second communicating means communicates image data with the receiving party.” (Claim 4, emphasis added). Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 4 is respectfully requested.

With regard to Claims 101 to 113, Applicant submits that the phrases “coding system” and “original length” are clear on their face and would readily be understood by one skilled in the art, and those terms can also be found in the specification, which provides examples of coding systems and original lengths. For instance, Table 1 on page 56 of the specification provides some examples of coding systems and original lengths that can be used in relation to one embodiment of the invention. Accordingly, the

rejections are traversed and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7 to 15, 25, 27, 30, 31, 34 to 38, 42, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 52, 101, 102, 106, 107, 109, 110, 112 and 113 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,023,345 (Bloomfield), Claims 3, 9, 10, 26, 32 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Bloomfield in view of allegedly admitted prior art, Claims 5, 6, 22, 28, 29, 41 and 103 were rejected under § 103(a) over Bloomfield in view of the allegedly admitted prior art and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,124,947 (Seo), Claims 16 to 20, 23, 24, 39, 40, 46, 50, 104, 105, 108 and 111 were rejected under § 103(a) over Bloomfield in view of the allegedly admitted prior art and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,356,356 (Miller), and Claims 21 and 44 were rejected under § 103(a) over Bloomfield in view of the allegedly admitted prior art and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,535,303 (Wolf).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention relates to communication between devices that can transmit/receive e-mail in which image data is attached to the e-mail. In one aspect of the present invention, in a case where communication of electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is to be performed, a determination is made of a format of the image data corresponding to a designated destination address by referring to a database. However, if the format of the image data corresponding to the designated destination address is not stored in the database, communication is performed with a destination device corresponding to the destination address to obtain functional information of the format of the image data before the communication of the electronic mail data with the destination device is performed. Thus, the image data being transmitted by email can be formatted properly for the destination device by referring to the functional information of the device.

With specific reference to the claims, amended independent Claim 1 is a communication apparatus for communicating electronic mail data by connecting to the Internet. The apparatus comprises designation means for designating a destination address, and determination means for determining a format of image data in correspondence with the designated destination address by referring to a database, in a case where transmission of the electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is performed. The apparatus also comprises communication means for performing communication with a destination device to obtain functional information of the format of the image data, in a case where the functional information of the format of the image data in correspondence with the designated destination address is not stored in the database, before the transmission of the electronic mail data is performed. Further, a transmission means is for transmitting the electronic mail data with the image data which is converted into the format determined by the determination means or the format based on the functional information obtained by the communication means.

Independent Claims 51 and 52 are method and system claims, respectively, that correspond generally to Claim 1.

Amended independent Claim 2 includes features along the lines of Claim 1, but more specifically is a communication apparatus comprising designation means for designating a destination address, first connecting means for connecting to a local area network and second connecting means for connecting to a wide area network, first communicating means for communicating electronic mail data by connecting to the Internet by one of the first and second connecting means, and second communicating means for performing facsimile communication by connecting to the wide area network by the second connecting means. The apparatus also comprises determination means for determining a

format of image data in correspondence with the designated destination address by referring to a database, in a case where transmission of the electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is performed. The apparatus also comprises control means for controlling the first communication means so as to perform communication with a destination device to obtain functional information of the format of the image data, in a case where the functional information of the format of the image data in correspondence with the designated destination address is not stored in the database, before the transmission of the electronic mail data is performed, and transmission means for transmitting the electronic mail data with the image data which is converted into the format determined by the determination means or the format based on the functional information obtained by the control means.

Independent Claim 25 is a computer-readable storage medium claim that corresponds generally to Claim 2.

The applied references, alone or in any permissible combination, are not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of independent Claims 1, 2, 25, 51 and 52, and in particular, are not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of determining a format of image data in correspondence with a designated destination address by referring to a database, in a case where transmission of electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is to be performed, and communicating with a destination device to obtain functional information of the format of the image data, in a case where the functional information of the format of the image data in correspondence with the designated destination address is not stored in the database, before transmission of the electronic mail is performed.

Bloomfield is seen to disclose sending a hardcopy document via a fax device to a recipient via electronic mail. Bloomfield discloses a Fax-Server 110 that is programmed to convert fax image data into image data in a pre-programmed format. However, Bloomfield is not seen to disclose or to suggest determining a format of image data in correspondence with a designated destination address by referring to a database, in a case where transmission of electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is performed, and communicating with a destination device to obtain functional information of the format of the image data, in a case where the functional information of the format of the image data in correspondence with the designated destination address is not stored in the database, before transmission of the electronic mail.

The allegedly admitted prior art is not seen to add anything that, when combined with Bloomfield would have rendered the invention obvious. In this regard, the allegedly admitted prior art described in the subject specification merely teaches that functional information is communicated between devices for facsimile transmissions, but the allegedly admitted prior art fails to teach anything with regard to the use of functional information in e-mail communications. A finding that it would have been obvious to apply the communication of functional information used in facsimile transmissions to the email communications so as to arrive at the invention is mere impermissible hindsight reasoning, and the only suggestion to do so is Applicant's invention. Thus, the invention would not have been, nor could it have been, obvious over Bloomfield and the allegedly admitted prior art.

The remaining references, namely Seo, Miller and Wolf, are not seen to cure the deficiencies of Bloomfield and the allegedly admitted prior art, either alone or in any permissible combination. Specifically, and combination of Bloomfield, the allegedly

admitted prior art, Seo, Miller, and/or Wolf, would not have resulted in the features of determining a format of image data in correspondence with a designated destination address by referring to a database, in a case where transmission of electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is performed, and communicating with a destination device to obtain functional information of the format of the image data, in a case where the functional information of the format of the image data in correspondence with the designated destination address is not stored in the database, before transmission of the electronic mail.

Accordingly, independent Claims 1, 2, 25, 51 and 52, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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